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Clare Rural District

in the

Administrative County of West Suffolk



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1945

To the Chairman and Members
of the
Clare Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present for your consideration my Annual Report for the year 1945 on the Sanitary Circumstances, Vital Statistics, and Health of the Clare Rural District.

The Report is drawn up in accordance with the instructions issued by the Ministry of Health.

The general health of the population has, so far, continued to be good.

ARTHUR MORGAN,
Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area	49,360 acres
Number of Parishes	24
Rateable Value	£32,041
Sum represented by a Penny Rate... ..	£128 15s. 10d.

	1938	1944	1945
Estimated resident Population of the District	8,368	8,281	8,036
Number of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books			2850

The whole area is agricultural in character and there are no industries or trades other than those directly or indirectly dependent upon agricultural pursuits.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Live Births :

	Total.	Male	Female.
Legitimate	119	59	60
Illegitimate	20	9	11
Totals ...	139	68	71
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	...	...	17.2
Birth rate per 1,000 population (England and Wales)	...	...	16.1

Stillbirths :

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Legitimate	1	—	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Totals ...	1	—	1

Rate per 1,000 (total live and still births)	7.1
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Deaths :

Deaths :	Total.	Male.	Female.		
	111	62	49		
Death Rate per 1,000 population	13.8
Death Rate per 1000 population (England and Wales)	...	...	...	...	11.4

Deaths from puerperal causes :—

(a) Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	Nil
(b) Other puerperal causes	...	...	...	Nil
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still births)	...	...	...	Nil

Number of deaths of infants under one year of age :—

					Total.	Male.	Female.
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	6	2	4
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Totals ...					7	2	5

Death Rate of infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	50.3
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	...	50.4
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	...	50.0
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	11
Deaths from Measles (all ages)...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Influenza (all ages)	...	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	Nil

Birth and Deaths Rates for the last ten years as compared with 1945 :—

	1935	-36	-37	-38	-39	-40	-41	-42	-43	-44	-45
Birth Rate	12.9	12.9	11.6	13.5	13.8	13.7	14.4	15.8	17.5	37.8	17.2
Death Rate	10.7	10.2	9.8	13.0	15.4	16.8	13.5	15.6	14.5	13.4	13.8

Classification of Deaths under age groups :—

					Male.	Female.	Total.
Under 1 year	...	...	2	...	5	...	7
1 and under 2	...	...	2	...	1	...	3
2 „ 5	...	...	—	...	—	...	—
5 „ 15	...	...	1	...	—	...	1
15 „ 25	...	...	3	...	1	...	4
25 „ 35	...	...	—	...	1	...	1
35 „ 45	...	...	2	...	1	...	3
45 „ 55	...	...	4	...	2	...	6
55 „ 65	...	...	7	...	6	...	13
65 „ 75	...	...	17	...	9	...	26
75 and over	...	...	24	...	23	...	47
Totals					62	49	111

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

There is no alteration in the general arrangements.

Public Health Officers of the Authority :

(a) A whole time Medical Officer of Health who also acts for other Authorities.

(b) Whole time Sanitary Inspectors.

Senior Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H. A. Smith (appointed 1st November, 1944). Mr. Smith is an Associate Member of the Institute of Sanitary Engineers, an Associate Member of the Royal Sanitary Institute and a Member of the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector, Mr. D. B. Jones (appointed 1st November, 1945). Mr. Jones holds the Sanitary Inspectors' Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Joint Board, and is an Associate Member of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

Hospitals :

There are no Hospitals in the district. Patients requiring treatment either attend Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, or the West Suffolk General Hospital at Bury St. Edmunds. The Newmarket Rural District, Cambs., have a well equipped Isolation Hospital at Exning, near Newmarket, and cases of infectious disease are accepted there at a charge of £2 12s. 6d. weekly plus the cost of removal by motor ambulance. It is probable, however, that this charge will be increased.

Water Supply :

The three Waterworks owned by the District Council are situated in the parishes of Clare, Hundon, and Withersfield, and provide these parishes with a piped supply of water. In each instance the water is obtained from boreholes sunk through boulder clay into the chalk. At Clare there are two such boreholes 250 and 291 feet deep respectively. The one at Hundon is 350 feet in depth and that at Withersfield 257 feet. The water obtained is of good quality presenting the usual characteristics of a hard chalk water but, as is not unusual where the boulder clay is involved, showing a precipitate of oxycarbonate of iron on exposure to air. At Clare and Hundon this is removed by aeration and filtration. The Withersfield waterworks, however, were not completed until 1939 and no arrangements had been made for dealing with this contingency. This precipitate of iron is, in itself, quite innocuous but it gives the water an objectionable appearance and is an annoyance to the domestic consumers.

In addition 11 houses at Withersfield, out of reach of the local mains, are supplied by an extension of the main from the adjoining Urban District of Haverhill, and a similar extension supplies 17 cottages in the village of Little Wratting. At Stoke-by-Clare about 90 premises have a piped supply from the waterworks in the ownership of Stoke College Estate.

All these supplies have been well maintained during the year and chemical and bacteriological examinations have continued to give satisfactory results. I think that full chemical and bacteriological examinations should be made at more frequent intervals.

The situation in the other parishes that are dependent upon private and public wells is still unsatisfactory and the principle of distributing 500 gallon water tanks at strategic points has been continued. These tanks are filled with water carted from the Hundon Waterworks. Sixty of them are in use. The position at present is that the Council's Consulting Engineers have been instructed to survey and deal with the whole question of water supplies throughout the area and, in the preparation of any scheme, to bear in mind the possibility of co-ordination with adjoining authorities who may be contemplating similar schemes. Sanction has now been given for the sinking of trial boreholes in the parish of Great Wratting and also in adjoining rural districts.

The results of this experimental work will, no doubt, determine the most economical and appropriate source or sources of supply. The Ministry's consent has also been obtained for the provision of a piped water supply to the parishes of Great Bradley, Little Bradley, Great and Little Thurlow. The water is to be supplied from the Withersfield waterworks and the estimated cost of the extension will be in the neighbourhood of £5,890. Altogether 250 houses with a population of about 1,000 persons are involved.

Drainage and Sewerage:

As there is no system of sewerage or sewage purification in operation in any part of the district the general situation remains the same except for some exaggeration of already existing nuisances. The matter has been frequently referred to in other Annual Reports so it is unnecessary to recapitulate details that are well-known to the District Council.

Recent work in connection with drainage matters comprised laying 100 yards of new drain at Kedington, the piping of 30 yards of an open offensive ditch at Withersfield, and the piping and filling in of an open ditch at Cavendish that receives sewage from a number of houses.

Mr. Smith in his capacity of Engineer and Surveyor to the Council is undertaking a survey of all existing drains and sewers in the area with the view of effecting co-ordination between schemes of water supply and sewage disposal. At Clare, for instance, an adequate scheme of sewage disposal and purification has been

needed for years and the needs of Clare and other parishes will, no doubt, be taken into consideration as soon as possible. Outlying properties that cannot be fitted in with any general scheme will also need to be dealt with and, in this connection, agreement on drainage improvements, including the installation of water closets and small disposal plants, has already been reached in the case of seven farms, three inns and five houses.

It is, perhaps, not always appreciated that the provision of a piped water supply is a relatively easy matter compared with the establishment of sewerage schemes involving the laying of sewers, consideration of gradients, and suitable sites for purification plants. In a scattered rural area of low rateable value like the Clare Rural District the problem is one of extreme complexity and cannot be solved overnight.

Rivers and Streams :

The streams drain the higher boulder clay area into the valley of the river Stour which runs through the district from North to South and then turning Eastwards forms its Southern boundary. The parishes situated along the course of the river are Great and Little Bradley, Little Thurlow, Great Thurlow, Great Wrating, Kedington, Wixoe, Stoke-by-Clare, Clare and Cavendish and the river receives pollution from all of them. The greatest nuisance, however, is at Clare. It is estimated that the total population of these villages is about 4,000 persons.

Closet Accommodation :

In 1938 it was estimated that the approximate numbers of the different types of conveniences in use in the area were :—

Pit privies	939
Pail closets	870
Water closets	294

During the year 10 water closets, 2 pail closets and one urinal have been installed and 11 pit privies abolished. Otherwise, the situation remains the same.

Public Cleansing and Refuse Disposal :

Refuse collections organised by the respective Parish Councils and carried out by contract are in operation at Clare, Hundon, Cavendish and Kedington. The refuse is disposed of by controlled tipping. The refuse tip at Hundon, however, became full to overflowing and alternative tipping accommodation has been found which should last for a period of 5 to 7 years.

A scheme has been prepared and submitted to the Council for the total scavenging of the whole area by direct labour. After due consideration the Council, having regard to the cost which it was estimated would entail an expenditure equal to a rate of 2/- in the pound, decided to limit the scheme to ordinary household refuse. At the time of writing this report the Council are considering the question of collection by contract and are in fact advertising for tenders for this work to cover the whole area.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following is a statement of the number and nature of inspections made during the year under the various Acts, Orders and Bye-laws in force within the area.

Housing matters	...	...	...	...	...	317
Sanitary accommodation and drainage	...	...	...	...	...	59
Disinfestation and Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	46
Milk and Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	31
Shops and Stores	...	...	...	...	...	14
Scavenging and Refuse Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	10
Water Supplies	...	...	...	...	...	164
Verminous Premises and Persons	...	...	...	...	...	12
Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	...	...	19
Meat and Other Foods	...	...	...	...	...	35
Other	...	...	...	...	...	71

Many visits were made during the first months of the year in connection with war emergency measures. These visits are not included in the above figures.

Summary of notices served :				Defects Remedied
	Informal			
Dwelling Houses (structural defects)	...	20		11
Nuisances (not included in above)	...	2		2
Water Supplies	...	2		2
Drainage (house)	...	10		10
Privies, Ash-pits and Cess Pools	...	9		9
Verminous Premises	...	4		3

Factories :

There are 32 factories on the register, 18 of which are classed as "Factories with Power."

One factory was discontinued (upholstry) and one factory commenced during the year.

Inspections have been made from time to time and no circumstances requiring any particular action have come to light.

HOUSING.

No new houses have been built during the year.

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year :

1. (1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts) 297
- (b) Number of inspections made for this purpose ... 317
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (including under Sub-Head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 297
- (b) Number of inspections made for this purpose... 317
- (3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 65
- (4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. 100

2. Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices :—
 - Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers... .. 4

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—
 - (a) There were no proceedings under the Housing Act, 1936 :
 - (a) Sections 9, 10 and 16.
 - (b) Sections 11 and 13.
 - (c) Section 12.
 - (b) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts :—
 - (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 4
 - (2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :
 - (a) By owners 4
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners —

All the houses inspected during the year needed repairs but, in many cases, only minor ones were asked for, the structural condition of the properties being so bad that it was utterly impossible to repair at anything like reasonable cost. Under these circumstances notices to repair extended only to make the houses watertight, and in no case has a house been rendered entirely fit for human habitation. The survey under the Hobhouse Report is proceeding. In three cases enlargement of accommodation in the size of house has been carried out.

Housing Programme :

The District Council is endeavouring to provide 84 permanent houses in the first and second years after the war and the long term programme will, it is hoped, allow for the building of a further 250. At the time of writing building has commenced in the Parish of Cavendish.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply :

At the end of the year the total number of farms registered was 65. Eight produce accredited milk and two tuberculin tested milk. Two accredited producers have disposed of their herds and the licences have been cancelled.

In the case of ordinary milk producers several premises were found to be in a most unsatisfactory condition and steps have been taken to ensure that a reasonable standard is attained. It is hoped that the action taken will result in accredited licences being asked for.

Meat and other Foods :

There are ten licensed slaughter-houses in the district used for occasional slaughtering only. Meat is distributed to the different butchers from a central slaughter-house situated in an adjoining area.

Unsound Food :

The following amounts of foodstuffs unfit for human consumption have been dealt with :—Beef 507 pounds, tinned foods 588 pounds.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933

There are 23 licensed slaughter-men, two of whom have licences to operate in areas outside the district.

Fried Fish Shops :

There is one shop situated at Clare. The trade is carried on in a satisfactory manner and under suitable conditions.

Rodent Destruction :

A workable Area Committee comprising representatives of four Local Authorities is in operation and a scheme has been adopted in principle. At the time of writing, due to numerous difficulties met with, this scheme has had to be abandoned.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

One hundred and fifty one notifications of infectious disease were received during the year including 2 of infective jaundice. Regulations making infective jaundice notifiable came into operation in December 1943. Measles and whooping cough became notifiable in 1939. In addition, however, there were 18 notifications of infectious disease amongst non-civilians. The total number of notifications of infectious disease during the last seven years as compared with the present year (Civilian cases only) is indicated in the following table

	1938	-39	-40	-41	-42	-43	-44	-45
Diphtheria	3	—	6	8	—	1	1	2
Scarlet fever	1	—	15	22	19	6	4	20
Cerebro spinal fever...	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Puerperal pyrexia ...	1	1	2	1	—	2	—	—
Measles	—	—	9	180	71	42	6	103
Whooping cough ...	—	9	11	69	8	27	3	16
Pneumonia	7	8	14	7	12	6	9	5
Erysipelas	3	1	4	1	5	2	2	1
Infective jaundice ...	—	—	—	—	—	11	7	2
Poliomyelitis	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1
Enteric fever	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Paratyphoid fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	15	22	62	289	116	97	32	151

It will be seen that during the current year there has been an increase in the number of cases of measles, whooping cough, and scarlet fever. There were also two cases of diphtheria in un-immunised persons. No deaths have been attributed to any of the infectious diseases.

The arrangements for diphtheria immunisation are the same as set out in my report for 1942. It is estimated that approximately 85% of children under 5 years of age and 87% of those between the ages of 5 and 15 have been fully protected. Diphtheria antitoxin is always supplied free of charge to Medical Practitioners.

The Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge, deals with any bacteriological examinations that may be required.

The following table shews the total number of notifications in age groups, together with the number removed to hospital.

Analysis of Notifiable Diseases under Age Groups.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	AT AGES—YEARS.											Admitted to Hospital	Deaths.
		1—	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	65—	
Diphtheria	2									1	1			2
Scarlet Fever	20				1	1	9	7		1	1			15
Measles	103		4	6	9	12	44	22	3	3				
Whooping Cough ..	16		2		2	3	9							
Pneumonia	5						1					2	2	
Erysipelas	1												1	
Infective Jaundice ..	2								1	1				
Poliomyelitis	1						1							
Paratyphoid	1									1				
TOTALS	151		6	6	12	16	64	29	4	7	2	2	3	17

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1944.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F.
0							1	
1			1					
5	1	1	2	1				
15								
25		1						
35								
45	1							
55								
65 and over		1						
Totals ..	2	3	3	1	—	—	1	—

Non-notified tuberculosis deaths, nil.

No action has been necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulation, 1925, or under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

ARTHUR MORGAN, M.A., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.

